The Unitarian Christian

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CONTENTS

"The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand"
By Rev. Frederick May Eliot, D. D.

The Place of Jesus in Religion
By Rev. Victor Fox

"Who Shall Enter—?"
By Rev. Carl Bihldorff

The Re-vindication of History
By Rev. Alexander Szent Ivany, D. D.

"The God That Failed," a Book Review.
By Rev. Rowland Gray Smith, Ph.D.

31452

The Fatherhood of God.
The Brotherhood of Man.
The Leadership of Jesus.
Salvation by Character.
The Progress of Mankind,
Onward and Upward forever

EDITORIAL

Anyone will agree that it takes capital to publish a magazine. For many people the term "capital" means money, and money only, but the behind-the-scene story of the operation of the Unitarian Christian Fellowship, and the publication of its monthly magazine, provokes a less superficial conclusion.

Thanks to those who subscribe regularly, and more particularly to all who contribute so generously to the work of the Fellowship, the money, though only a small portion of the real "capital", does pay the basic bills. The really priceless capital worth of our organization, however, consists of the thought, time and energy of those who carry on the detail for the Fellowship organization and those who write inspirational and informative articles.

Today's prevailing misunderstanding among citizens of our so-called "capitalistic economy", that capital is merely money, has devaluated the real worth of the American Way of Life. It has led to the division of the American populace into fictitious classes and diverted attention of the mass voters from the real issues which any truly self-reliant nation of initiative confronts. In many communities, the opinion among those who labor for worthy causes of charity and reform, that money alone is essential in the enterprise, has made their organizations, churches included, successful in a statistical sense only. Often the raising of huge sums of money, while appearing impressive, is offset by the organization's dependence upon professional workers whose wages eat up the impressive sum, and sometimes the money is gained at the cost of spiritual standards or of fellowship.

Capital, broadly defined as "anything one possesses for which another will pay," may be such a tangible thing as real property or such an immaterial value as "influence" or "creativity and initiative". Nor must payment always be in terms of money; it may be the simple repayment in kind by one who is grateful.

The Unitarian Christian is published from the capital of its members and friends, which, though inclusive of money, is worth more than the price of one dollar subscriptions or large contributions. They who receive the benefits of this investment, may repay also by participating actively in the extension of the cause for which we stand.

This is an appeal for "capital" in both its narrowest and broadest sense. Subscribers are urged to introduce friends to the Unitarian Christian magazine. All who can are invited to contribute to the over-all work of the Fellowship, but more basic is the need for all Unitarians to reaffirm, during these times of theological confusion, the primacy of believing and living the simple gospel summed up in Love to God and Love to Man.

H. R.

The message of Rev. Frederick May Eliot, D., President of the American Unitarian sociation, given at the Installation of v. John O. Fisher as Minister of the rst Unitarian Society, West Newton, Mass., September 24, 1950.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND"

DR. FREDERICK MAY ELIOT

For more than a hundred years this church has ne witness in this community to the free rit of religion; and while each minister in turn spoken with his own personal accent, there been a continuity of basic loyalty to the ition of free Christianity that has given unity urpose and steadiness of direction to the story his society's life and influence. This evening have gathered in this beautiful house of ver to install another minister in the succes- of voices proclaiming from the pulpit of this rch the unchanging power of freedom and h in a changing world.

Because this church has always recognized and rished the central place of the life and teach- s of Jesus in the progressive unfolding of the faith which we call by the name Unitarian, s appropriate that we should once again sider the question of what Jesus himself re- ded as the primary responsibility of the gious teacher; and the words that I have sen as our text give a clear answer. To his nest disciples, as he sent them forth, Jesus . "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom eaven is at hand." However different our ld may be from that of his time, whatever nges may have transformed the face of the h and the thoughts of men, these words from ips of Jesus still constitute the fundamental ructions which every minister of religion who nowledges that his faith is rooted in the istian soil will strive to obey.

hey are positive, active, vigorous words, e the blunt imperatives—"go," and "preach" nd the emphatic present tense of the affirma- about the kingdom of heaven — "is at l." The injunction that Jesus lays upon e who would be his messengers is not a call to contemplative life, nor to the silent peace of stered aisles, but to a life of hazardous action. the good news they are to proclaim is not e far-off divine event but a very present ty. I think we shall not be mistaken if we assume that these same qualities of urgent imperative and immediate presence of the kingdom of heaven would constitute the core of the commission that today as two thousand years ago Jesus would lay upon his disciples. For the minister of religion in the twentieth century as in the first, Jesus prescribes action rather than meditation, preaching as the most important assignment, and the affirmation that the kingdom of heaven is just at hand as the supremely important content of his preaching. Such, I hope and believe, is the understanding of the minister and congregation of this church.

Just what do we mean when we say that a preacher is primarily concerned to talk about the kingdom of heaven? I think we mean that he will center his attention upon the things that haunt our dreams — the lovely, remote, appealing things that ought to govern our daily conduct and don't; the things that would make for peace in a world of turbulent disorder; the things that would give us beauty for ashes and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, if only somehow we could bring them down to earth; the things that are flouted by most of the machinery and systems and customs that constitute what we call modern civilization; the things that are set in deadly opposition to the kingdoms of this world and the anarchies of our time; the things we miss as we go about our daily business, even when we are trying to conduct that business honorably; all the color and value that Francis Thompson summed up when he spoke of "the drift of pinions" outside "our own clay-shuttered door." Something like this, I think, is what we have in mind when we say "the kingdom of heaven."

(Continued)

This is what we are to preach about, and what we are to say is that this kingdom of heaven is not remote but very near to us now. It is just at hand, within reach of us, at this very moment. It is not at the other end of a long road, it is not buried in the depths of the sea, it is not hidden from us in the astronomical distances of interstellar space. On the contrary, it is ours, here and now, ours for the asking, ours if we want to see it and will open our eyes. Incredible as it may sound, this is the good news we are to announce; and our task as preachers is to announce it in a way to persuade our hearers that it is true so that they will transform their lives, and the world, in the light of it.

Nothing else matters, the most learned discourses on philosophy, or economics, or political science, or aesthetics, or current events, or physics, or anthropology, or anything else, — these cannot take the place of the central affirmation of the present reality and instant availability of the kingdom of heaven, if as preachers we are to follow in the way that was marked out for us by Jesus. Nor can the most forceful and challenging attacks upon evil provide a substitute. To analyze and condemn the forms which in our day are taken by the ancient impulses of sin, to catalogue the bleak items on the dreadful schedule of contemporary social injustice — this needs to be done, but it is not a substitute for the fundamental affirmation. To indict a society that tolerates and even promotes the presence of cruelty is not our primary business, nor is it our primary business to devise blue-prints for a new social order.

But once we give central place in our preaching to the incredible truth that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, then all the other things fall into place and perspective. We find that we must talk about anything that blocks the road to the discovery of the kingdom, and we must talk about it in such a way as to help people get rid of it. We cannot ignore the facts of human stupidity and wilful blindness and sin. We cannot ignore the facts of social injustice and cruelty and conflict. The reason why we cannot ignore them is that these are the barriers that shut out the light of the kingdom of heaven, and it is our business to break down those barriers so that people can see the light and make it part of their daily experience. Preaching is not merely a matter of saying the right words. It involves also clearing out whatever makes the right words meaningless and impotent. It is not enough to inform a man that if he stretches out his hand he may grasp the spiritual values that are just at his side. We must touch his will and somehow give him the courage and the confidence that can arouse him to action. He must believe that he can break through the barriers, that the road-block is not insuperable, that stupidity and sin are not invincible, that social injustice and cruelty are not incurable, that touching of men's wills is inherent in the commission to preach, and it has always marked the true preacher.

Many years ago, a sermon was preached in this place by one of your ministers with the title, "Spiritual Nerve and Circumstances." As a youngster, I was told by my father that this sermon was a great sermon, as I had been told by him before that the preacher was a great minister. After a while I discovered for myself that what my father had told me was true. Julian Jaynes was a great minister, and this was a great sermon; but it is also a superb example of the very essence of all real preaching, and its title is a summary of our whole duty as preachers.

Our business is to know enough about circumstances and enough about spiritual values so that we can help people to nerve their faltering wills and do battle effectively against anything — within themselves or within society — that prevents their laying hold upon that kingdom of heaven which is within their reach. In this church I am sure that you want your minister to do just that, and I am equally sure that tonight his prayer is that he may, with God's help, meet your expectations.

* * * * *

UNITARIANS?

WHAT KIND of people are these Unitarians?

The calibre of a movement may be judged by the type of person who follows it. Does it command the loyalty of thoughtful, progressive, substantial individuals? When Thomas Jefferson penned a letter which flowed from the enthusiasm of his own faith, saying: "I trust that there is not a young man now living in the United States who will not die a Unitarian," he knew that many eminent persons of his day espoused this religion and that countless others would pass away without being aware that, in their religious attitude and belief they, too, had been Unitarians. No group of people stands closer to the foundation of democracy in America than these religious liberals.

From:
"Introducing Unitarianism"
By John Nichols Booth

THE PLACE OF JESUS IN RELIGION

By Rev. Victor Fox, B. A.
Minister of Kilburn Unitarian Church,
London, England

(The last of two articles)

Why did His followers love Jesus so much?

I suggest as the first reason the fact that He ed in such close communion with God.

Jesus taught that God is "Our Father." We not the accidental product of the purposeless l endless movement of blind material forces. n is not just a "passing phenomenon in an odd ner of an infinite universe." He is created by l in some respects in the image of God. But proof of *the reality of God* was not an argument. was *the kind of life Jesus lived*. Often He went o the desert, or to the mountains or to the rden of Gethsemane to pray. Luke tells us t once "He continued all night in prayer." ereby He gained a clearer knowledge of the l of God and the strength to do His will. That s why His life reflected the reality of Him o is invisible. When men looked on Him they w that He had been with God. His disciples re sure that He cared for them, was their nd and leader and Lord, but they were aware that His chief concern was not with them. was completely consecrated to the service of Father in Heaven with Whom He held stant communion while on earth. The ulti- te nature of God is forever hidden from te minds, but we know God in part through se who frequently enter into His presence and ng back with them something of the Divine ry. When we meet them we instinctively bow n in reverence. Because, through constant ver, the glory of God shone in the face of us and illuminated His words, His disciples ed Him "The Prince of Glory" and "The ht of the World."

A second reason for men's regard for Him was fact that He recognized the divinity, the nite worth, of every man, woman and child. did not seek out the company of the rich, the ned and the powerful, for He loved the mon people. He became known as "The nd of publicans and sinners." He took little ldren into His arms and blessed them. He iced and applauded the splendid gift of the r woman who put two mites into the Treasury. was the smallest of contributions, but it was she had. He chose His disciples chiefly from fisherfolk of the Sea of Galilee. He talked in friendliest way with a despised Samaritan, made a good Samaritan, — a foreigner and a etic — the hero of the finest of His parables. allowed a woman who was a great sinner to r ointment on His head and feet and did not defiled by her touch. He talked to vast wds of the common people about the ngs that pertain to the Kingdom of God. There s no attempt to limit His message to a small ct group of intellectuals who flattered them- es that they were vastly superior to the rant masses. His parables concerned the ing of seed, labouring in the vineyard, casting a net into the sea, occupations of the working people.

Not all great teachers have wide human interests. Nor do all saints find it possible to keep in touch with God and at the same time with their fellow men. Jesus was a man who loved the common people, and so has gained the affection of all who believe in the brotherhood of man.

There is yet another reason for "The place of Jesus in religion." He was one who "went about doing good." He taught that "Love is the fulfilling of the Law" and practiced love Himself. He believed that the greatest, in the eyes of God, are those who minister to the needs of others, and He set an example of self-sacrificing service day after day. He could say quite naturally "This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you."

It is difficult to know what to make of the miracle stories. I personally cannot believe that He fed five thousand people with a few loaves and fishes. Like Albert Schweitzer I think the story possibly arose as a result of some communal meal where Jesus sought to teach the fact of human brotherhood by giving each person present a little food from the slender resources of His disciples and their friends. This may have been a vast "Communion Service" foreshadowing the more solemn service of the Last Supper. If this is so then a miracle-loving age has completely spoilt the incident. But concerning the miracles we should notice that they are nearly all miracles of healing. The blind receive their sight; the deaf hear; the lepers are cleaned; the lame walk; the withered hand is "restored whole as the other." Perhaps Jesus had supernormal powers. Perhaps He understood natural laws more completely than we do today. But the one certain fact revealed by these stories is that He had compassion, that He showed sympathy toward the sick, that He went about doing good.

Most of us are constantly seeking pleasure or possessions for ourselves. We want an easy pleasant prosperous life. We know, in a vague sort of way, that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things that he possesseth," and that pleasure is trivial, unsatisfying and vain. We agree that possessions should only be sought as a means of fuller and finer service, and that pleasure is only justified as recreation — to re-create and re-vivify our capacity for good work. But our instincts overcome our principles and secondary things become our chief concern.

It was not so with Jesus. He never at any time sought anything for Himself. He was completely devoted to the cause of the Kingdom, and the welfare of His fellowmen. The main reason for the extreme exaltation of Jesus I have left till last. It is the fact that, being what He was, yet He was crucified. This may seem a strange reason for praising Him. It appears to be illogical, but love has little to do with logic.

(Continued, page 6)

"WHO SHALL ENTER — ?"

By Rev. Carl Bihldorff,
Minister, First Parish in Brookline, Mass.

The accomplishments of Unitarians in America are widely known. Though we rank with the smaller denominations — only one in two thousand is a Unitarian — our contribution to art, literature, science and law has been phenomenally high, and in humanitarian causes our people greatly exceed their expected representation. There is, however, one field in which Unitarians have little claim to distinction: the art of worshipping.

I am, of course, not referring to the service of worship, for in this field many of our churches excell. Our music, hymns, prayers, readings, and the dignified simplicity of our ritual are, though capable of improvement, far superior to that found in most churches. It is in the art of worshipping that many individual Unitarians are least competent.

The primary explanation of this lack lies in our devotion to a reasonableness in theology which has made us suspicious of, or at least has inclined us to stand aloof from, anything that lies beyond the grasp of rational analysis, or which seems to say something about which we have intellectual reservations. Some Unitarians are too busy dissecting the service — holding a word, phrase or symbol up to critical evaluation and diagnosis that they rarely grasp the power of these ideas as instruments of worship.

To worship successfully usually means to be lifted emotionally, not to climb intellectually. But since Unitarians make such a fetish of one aspect of their being, namely, the rational, they frequently starve their emotional, esthetic and mystical nature. They forget that life is more than reason, that there are numerous approaches to "knowledge," many avenues the spirit may travel in its search for and discovery of living waters.

In some ways we Unitarians are like the Pharisees of Jesus' day; cautious, precise, logical, ever ready to argue over the fine meaning of words, and much more concerned with semantics than with spiritual awareness. Once the Pharisees asked this question: "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?" In answering them Jesus spoke not from the law, not from the judgments of reason, but from His heart. Even the disciples were confused and perplexed by His answer, for they, too, questioned His judgment. All this was background and gives profound significance to an event which followed. As He spoke to them, and they with Him, people began to approach, bringing children "that He should touch them." The disciples were so engrossed in the problem before them that "They rebuked those" whose presence threatened their full discussion of what to them was a most important intellectual consideration.

It was then that Jesus saw in the presence of those children the illustration of a truth His disciples were unable to grasp. After welcoming and receiving the little ones He said to His disciples, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, He shall not enter therein."

What a rebuke that was! In effect He was saying to them, "Life is more than reason, more than logic, law and intellectual wisdom. The finest intimation of truth our existence offers, the deepest comprehensions our souls may share, are born, not of the mind, but of a childlike heart that dares to affirm its loftiest intuitions of God and life's meaning.

When Unitarians rediscover Jesus' art of approaching life through reverence, a childlike trust, daring faith, and a listening heart, we shall be guided, elevated, and exalted in our experience of worship.

JESUS IN RELIGION

(Continued from Page 5)

Reason does not noticeably enter into human relationships, and we are none of us perfectly rational in thought and conduct.

Thousands have been crucified, and their names completely forgotten. Many thousands were burnt at the stake for daring to think for themselves, and to express their honest opinions, but few of them are remembered and honoured today. Millions died on the battlefield for causes they believed just and noble, but their names fade from the war memorials and from the minds of their descendants. Yet Jesus is remembered. At the name of Jesus many bow the knee. He is still honoured in all lands and languages of the earth. Why is this? Here is the answer. He was one who always strove to learn and do the will of God. He made it His business in life to go about doing good. It was said of Him, "In Him was life, and life was the light of men." The wisdom of His teachings so impressed His disciples that they exclaimed, "Never man spake like this man!" It is recorded that Pilate declared, "I find no fault in Him"; that one of the thieves crucified with Him cried out, "We indeed suffer for our crimes, but this man has done nothing amiss"; and that a centurian, seeing Him die, uttered the words, "Truly this was the Son of God."

When we think of the character of His life, the circumstances of His death become unbearably tragic. That such a man should have been deserted, betrayed, denied, slandered, insulted in an outrageous manner, and then nailed to a cross somehow arouses an intense devotion. It is this which accounts for the place of Jesus in our religion.

THE RE-VINDICATION OF HISTORY

(Second of Four Articles)

By Rev. Alexander Szent-Ivanyi, D. D.
Minister, First Congregational Society
(Unitarian),
Jamaica Plain, Mass.

Harvard Professor Arthur M. Schlesinger, is a "New Deal Liberal." He also advocates a w radical program" for a "militant liberal-," and he is undoubtedly one of the best in-med and "up-to-date" intellectuals in this ntry. In other words, he is everything the itarian "avant-garde" could wish for. Yet, in of his most recent works (*The Vital Center*), gives a whole collection of quotable arguments the validity of the historical approach to the derstanding of our problems today. It is note-rthy how Prof. Schlesinger finds history a jor asset in the armory of successful men and vements. Churchill (the anti-socialist!) was aked in the continuities of history," therefore saved Britain." The Federalist Party, milton and Adams, though conservative, "had gh sense of national welfare" and "they per-med an extraordinary job in laying solidly and urately the foundations for the American ion" because "they knew history." Theodore sevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge "both turned relief to history" and became successful esmen "in an epoch dominated by *arri-s.*" The arrivistes, on the other hand, were resentatives of "a new, raw class in politics, ocent of tradition, ignorant of history." is notable how often a knowledge of history rates the responsible conservative from the ocrat."

ow, if the knowledge of history is important nderstand American democracy which has a stitution and a Supreme Court to interpret — Unitarianism, which has no "Constitu-" (official declaration of beliefs) nor a preme Court" (an ecclesiastical forum) to rpret it, should not be expected to be able afford the wasteful luxury of discarding ory either. "It has been said that Unitarian-is not a body of beliefs but a state of mind" — Dr. Charles E. Park, and the "avant-de" would surely agree with him. Therefore, "confessional" Christians could get along out history ("could," but they don't!), as have their creeds and Dogmatics to tell n the bases of their existence, but Unitarians be only "spiritual Gypsies" and "tramps of gion" without history telling them what they

his all generations of Unitarians knew but own. Even in times and in countries where when Unitarians were forced by an antag-tic monarch or parliament to present their h in codifyable form (see the self-contradic-existence of a Unitarian Symbolica Theo-a!), their most cherished printed treasure was ally a history of their past. Uzoni-Kenosi's *tory* in Transylvania, from the 18th cen-, J. H. Allen's *Historical Sketch*, G. W. ke's *American Unitarianism* in the Anglo-n world, from the late 19th century, and E. M. Wilbur's monumental *History of Unitarianism* (second volume due shortly) were regarded as *the* most valuable source-books in their respective countries whenever a renewing of Unitarianism was contemplated. It is characteristic, about the influence of the "avant-garde" and their "scientism" that Dr. Wilbur's great book did not create a greater impression on us and did not cause a "re-thinking" of the message labeled "Unitarian." Apart from its historical value, the scholarship itself should be sufficient to denominate his *A History of Unitarianism* the most valuable Unitarian book of the last quarter century, and probably the only one which will be remembered by later generations from this period. The publication of the second volume seems to coincide very fortunately with a more and more growing desire to find that "lost radiance" of Unitarianism without which we can not fulfill a creative role in this troubled era.

How the omission of history can lead to serious mistakes, we can illustrate in the oft heard (now-a-days!) assertion that Unitarianism is identical with the "liberal faith in individual, natural man." Our distinguished colleague, N. W. Lovely, must forgive me if I use his excellent Conference Sermon of 1949 (The Decline of the West and the Liberal Faith) for a definition of Unitarianism. "I am not here speaking of the theological and doctrinaire Unitarianism which, by verbal accident, has confused the minds of so many" — he says. For him, Unitarianism begins in the 18th century in England and America, and is identical with that "liberal faith in individual, natural man," expressed by Channing as his "one sublime idea." Whatever Mr. Lovely means by "doctrinaire" Unitarianism, it seems a pity thus to disinherit all the Unitarian churches which existed before the Liberal era. I sincerely hope that Mr. Lovely will take the trouble and glance through the pages of Wilbur's *History of Unitarianism*, or at least his *Our Unitarian Heritage*. I feel certain that Mr. Lovely, objective thinker that he is, will change his opinion about the Unitarians of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries who suffered death and persecution as "Unitarians" for so many years before the "verbal accident" — if it was an accident! — took place in England and America.

It is also most unfortunate to represent ideas and movements as if they had sudden births like Pallas Athena in the oft quoted myth (Jumping out of the head of Zeus in full armor.)

We may say that the first Industrial Revolution for instance took place somewhere around 1760, but everyone knows that the conditions which produced it were ripening for a long time before that date. The same way, the Unitarian "faith" in the "dignity of man" was preceded by a long period of development, a development in the idea of God.

The "worth of man" depended on the idea of a loving Father, just as the high teachings of the prophets about man depended on their Ethical Monotheism. Without "theological" Unitarianism, the "dignity of man" would never have been preached. As, indeed, Channing himself put it: "There can be no spirit of brotherhood, no true peace, any farther than men come to understand their affinity with and relation to God and the infinite purpose for which he gave them life."

If we deny our relationship with the "theological" Unitarianism of the pre-Channing period, we have to look somewhere else for ancestors. The "liberal faith in individual, natural man" — without "theological" Unitarianism, — unavoidably points to that Lockian Liberalism which freed the emerging middle-class from the domination of the last vestiges of Feudalism in the Monarchy. No doubt, that liberation was one of the grandest events in history. To identify, however, Unitarianism with a political philosophy, is a confession of the worthlessness of Unitarianism as religion. Religions do carry the impact of trends and political ideologies, but they are not identical with them. They must outlive them, if they claim any value "sub specie aeternitatis."

I wish every Unitarian would read Prof. Schlesinger's already quoted book, *The Vital Center*. In the chapter, The Failure of the Left, Mr. Schlesinger has hard words to say about this "liberal faith in individual, natural man." "The belief in progress was the product of the Enlightenment, cross fertilized with allied growths, such as science, bourgeois complacency, Unitarianism and a faith in the goodness of man" — he says. But "the eighteenth century has exaggerated man's capacity to live by logic alone," "Progress had betrayed the progressives," who were "committed to an unwarranted optimism about man."

If Unitarianism is nothing but "the liberal faith in individual, natural man," then Unitarianism has outlived its usefulness and will slowly fade out of existence with the Laissez faire Liberalism of the 19th century. If Unitarianism is but the "superstructure" of 19th century Liberalism, — 20th century Socialism will not have us, we shall be like the old bottles into which no one puts the new wine. Freedom of conscience, freedom of inquiry without which Unitarians can not live, are but so many "meaningless" expressions for the Marxist Socialist today. Unitarianism as "superstructure" of 19th century political Liberalism is but an episode in the history of the West, — as a living force, as religion, it has no future, not even a present.

This is the conclusion where a non-historical appreciation of Unitarianism leads us.

But it is only a nightmare, nothing more. The real picture is entirely different. It is hopeful, promising and exciting, the real picture of Unitarianism which a historical interpretation reveals.

(To be continued)

THE GOD THAT FAILED

A Book Review

By Rev. Rowland Gray Smith, Ph.D.
Minister, Third Congregational Society,
Hingham, Mass.

Richard Crossman, British member of Parliament from Coventry, has thought it worthwhile to make a book out of the confessions of half a dozen men who were converts to Communism, but whose allegiance this "god" failed to hold.

Between the Russian Revolution in 1917 and the Hitler-Stalin Pact in 1939 numberless intellectuals were attracted to Communism. The six men who now tell the story of their journey into Communism and their return from it are all creative writers — poets, playwrights, novelists, biographers, journalists. They were chosen partly because of their fame, and partly because they were considered capable of recounting, objectively and dispassionately, how they came to espouse the Communist cause.

Two of the six are American, Louis Fischer and Richard Wright. Dates are interesting. Fischer went to Russia in 1922 when he was twenty-six and was a Communist supporter for 17 years. Wright, the Negro poet and story-writer, was a member of the Communist Party in Chicago for a while in the late thirties, when he himself was in his late twenties.

The nationalities of the other four are Hungarian, Italian, French and English. The Hungarian Koestler was twenty-six when he became a Communist in 1931; he resigned from the Party when he was thirty-three. The Italian Silone joined in 1921 when he was twenty-one and left in 1930 after having been head of the Italian Communist underground against Mussolini. The Frenchman Gide, who is regarded by many as Europe's greatest living writer, was fifty-seven when, in 1926, he became an enthusiast for Communism. Ten years later he visited Russia and at once published his disavowal. The Englishman is the poet Stephen Spender who joined the Party in 1937, when he was twenty-six, but was from the beginning only half a member since he criticised some of the Party's policies.

President Truman has spoken of anti-Communism as an hysteria. I have myself been appalled at the vulgarity of some attacks made upon Communists. I therefore welcome a book which, though designedly anti-Communist, is at the same time a rebuke to hysteria of any kind, whether Communist or anti-Communist.

Two questions, above others, will engage our interest. The first will be, "What is it that makes refined and creative spirits espouse Communism?" And perhaps that is more interesting than the second question: "What is it that leads them to divorce themselves from it?"

The answer to both questions will be the same. It is, in a word, because they were Christians.

Perhaps not more than two of the six would it that way themselves, but let us see. at made them Communists in the first place? e American Negro was awakened to Comnism by the discovery that there really did st in this world an organized search for the th regarding the lives of the oppressed and ated. It was being done, he was told, in one h of the earth. Out of the Communist magaes he read came a passionate call for the eriences of the disinherited. And his own rt was fired with a desire to tell the common ple of the self-sacrifice of those who were ving to unite them.

The story of the others contains the same ele-nt. Arthur Koestler who, at twenty-one, ame the sole support of his parents in Hun-y, quickly developed a strong dislike for the iously rich — not, he says, from envy, but ause they could buy expensive things without uilty conscience. And it was after he had ieved a comfortable income as a journalist t he sought the ranks of the proletariat and, overty again, lent his talents.

gnazio Silone, as a youth in Italy, and son of nall landowner, developed, he knows not how, pontaneous intolerance for injustice, for the stice done not to himself but to others, and had a way of experiencing a feeling of guilt en he sat down to a well-laden table. These ulses led him early into Communist ranks, to aking with his parents, to changing his name, living a false life to avoid suspicion of conatorial activity.

tephen Spender tells how in childhood he was ressed by the teaching of the Gospels that n are equals in the sight of God and that the es of the few are an injustice to the many. radually I became convinced that the only e for unemployment, other than war, was an rnational society in which the resources of world were exploited in the interests of all the ple in the world."

ouis Fischer went to Europe as a newspaper respondent and, making his home in Russia, ame a partisan of the Soviets because, he s, they were an experiment in the interest of downtrodden majority.

inally, Andre Gide, who first became an stle of Communism when he was more than e the age of the others, was well-to-do from h. His social conscience was fully awakened n, on an expedition to Africa, he saw the loitation of the natives in the French equaal possessions. Thereafter he was a champion ll underdogs. Taking up Communism, he he had always been a Communist at heart. hy do I long for Communism? Because I eve it to be equitable and because I suffer on unt of the injustices which I feel more ngly than ever when it is I myself who am ored." Gide expressly says: "I have written, I firmly believe, that if Christianity had ly prevailed and if it had fulfilled the teaching Christ, there would today be no question of mmunism.

The worst that could be said against those six n is that their dreams misled them to place their hopes upon a cause which, on fuller acquaintance, proved far from noble. This brings us to the other question. In what way did the "god" they had trusted fail them?

I need not dwell upon the many things that are wrong with Communism. That is what everyone around us is doing nowadays. Many of its evils our six erstwhile Communists were well aware of. Their minds were ever alert. But they were all guilty, it seems to me, of a kind of sophistry. They were willing to persuade themselves that all the obvious ugliness of Bolshevik behavior was to be tolerated because of some good things the Bolsheviks accomplished, and especially because of some great good they were eventually to bring to the whole world. Indeed, it was the orthodox doctrine of the Party that the evils of dictatorship would, within a reasonable time, wither away, and that a perfect democracy would take its place.

The story of each of the six is highly individual. They ceased to be at home with the doctrine that evil may be done today so that good may come tomorrow; and, being themselves creative thinkers, they could not surrender for ever their right of private judgment.

The Italian tells of a joke that spread all round Moscow. At a meeting of the Communist International the representative from England objected to a policy by interrupting with the remark, "But that would be a lie!" Laughter loud and frank and long greeted this remark. What could be funnier than a supposed Communist who did not know that the end justified the means, that evil may be deliberately done today in the name of some good that may come out of it tomorrow?

Perhaps, after all, that is the one reason above all others why good men cannot remain Communists.

Crossman writes in his Introduction that any one of the contributors would have checked himself in his journey from Communism and gone back again "if the Party had shown a gleam of understanding of his belief in human freedom and human dignity." Notwithstanding Crossman's selection of this reason above all others, it seems to me that here again the Communists justify themselves in terms of their doctrine of means and ends. The destruction of freedom is regarded by the Communist as a necessary and temporary expedient in the interest of a fuller freedom at some future time.

This basic doctrine I do not hesitate to call diabolical. Ends always belong to the future and are always retreating. What always matters, and matters supremely, is the means you use, day by day, to achieve your ends. You cannot deliberately do evil today in the name of some good that may come out of it tomorrow. What we have to lay to heart is the supreme importance of the present. You cannot build good tomorrows with bad todays. You cannot establish future truth by telling lies in the present. You cannot establish a free world except by honoring freedom all along the line. The way to heaven lies, at every moment, in the opposite direction from the way to hell. "Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

ONWARD AND UPWARD

(A News Letter of Unitarian Christian Progress)

THE FELLOWSHIP FRONTIER. The Fall meeting of the Unitarian Christian Fellowship in the Boston area was held October 30th at Arlington Street Church, opening with supper followed by talk, "Standards For The Ministry", by Rev. Duncan Howlett, First Church of Boston.

The promising NEW policy of the Unitarian Christian Fellowship will be illustrated in sermon given by the new Editor, Rev. Heinz Rettig of Newburyport, on Sunday evening, November 12 at 7:30 o'clock in the Second Church of Boston. Reception to follow. **All churches in area invited.**

The October issue of The Unitarian Christian provokes denominational wide discussion. Editor invited to speak at several ministerial associations where discussions promise to be provocative.

DENOMINATION WIDE. New England Council studying possibility of regional director for Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. Concord church calls its minister to full time duty. Rev. John Ruskin Clark, minister at Concord, formerly served as Regional Director of New Hampshire in addition to serving the Concord church. Rev. Clayton B. Hale speaks at Worcester District Alliance meeting at Unitarian Church, Worcester, Massachusetts. Topic "Unitarian Christianity". Result. Nearly 100 copies of October issue of The Unitarian Christian prove insufficient to meet demand of Alliance women.

ECHOES FROM THE CHURCHES. Hingham Second Church raising money for "Meeting House Rehabilitation Fund". Contributions solicited and forthcoming from churches outside area. Salem First Church has over 75 officers and committee heads on staff for 1950–1951. Parish Night programs successful in drawing parishioners together at Lynn Church. Youth group puts on scrap drive in Pembroke for special Fund Raising Committee of the church. Minister in Greenfield, Massachusetts, Rev. Paul Harmon Chapman, serves as denominational representative on Massachusetts Council of Churches Committee on Audio-Visual Education. Classes in Townline pottery, lamp shades, and lamp base making being taught in parish house of Second Church, Boston, under its weekday activity program. Successful and inspirational Day of Prayer observed on weekday at First Parish in Portland, Maine, with minister conducting prayers and spiritual guidance materials on hand.

APPEAL TO YOU. The Unitarian Christian monthly is interested in the doings of your church. Put our Editorial office on your bulletin mailing list. Exchange of news is a concrete basis of fellowship activity.

Benediction

As we go about among men, touching the hands and lives of our fellows, make us, our Father, friends of all the world. Save us from blighting the fresh flower of any heart by the flare of sudden anger or secret hate. May we not bruise the rightful self-respect of any by contempt or malice. Help us to cheer the suffering by our sympathy, to revive the disheartened by our hopefulness and to strengthen in all the wholesome sense of the worth and joy of life. Grant that we may look all men in the face with the eyes of a brother. May we rejoice that we are able to serve our fellow men.

Amen.

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Articles for publication in this periodical are welcome for consideration from all who wish to use these columns to express Unitarian Christianity.

APPLICATION

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I hereby subscribe to the purpose of the Unitarian Christian Fellowship as outlined above. Herewith is $.....in payment of membership for the current year, April 1st, 1950 through March 31st, 1951; this to include a yearly one dollar subscription, to the publication of the Fellowship.*

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CONTEST HEADLINE

The Unitarian Christian Fellowship's Essay Contest is still open to Unitarian young people.

The contest, initially announced in the May issue of The Unitarian Christian, was extended to December 15 in order to allow for the maximum of publicity and participation by Unitarian youth.

The subject for essays entered in the contest is, "What Unitarian Christianity Means To Me", and promises the following prizes to the winners: First Prize, Fifty Dollars; Second Prize, Thirty Dollars or Scholarship for AUY Week at Star Island (or any comparable Unitarian Youth Conference); Third Prize, Twenty Dollars or Scholarship for one week at Rowe Camp (or any comparable Unitarian Youth Conference).

The winning essays will be announced at the January 1951 meeting of the Fellowship. Judges will be announced in the December issue of The Unitarian Christian.

Rules governing the contest are as follows:

1.) **All entrants must be between the ages of 14 and 25 years and the members of affiliated (A.U.A.) churches or A.U.Y. groups.**

2.) **Each contestant must write name, age, church, and address on a separate sheet of paper which can be readily detached before essays are read by the judges.**

3.) **No essay must be in excess of 1000 words and should be typed, double spaced or written in ink.**

4.) **Entries must be received at 102 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass. postmarked not later than midnight, Friday, December 15 and will become the property of the Unitarian Christian Fellowship.**

5.) **Entries will be judged on the basis of aptness, sincerity, and originality of thought and the decision of the judges shall be final.**

Members of the contest committee are Rev. Lawrence Jaffa, P. O. Box 85, Pembroke, Mass., Rev. Paul Harmon Chapman, Greenfield, Mass., and Rev. Clayton B. Hale, Second Church, Boston, Mass. Additional information may be obtained by writing any member of this committee.